

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A method for relieving joint pain or other discomforts associated with joint disorders in a warm-blooded vertebrate comprising the step of delivering to said vertebrate by oral ingestion a nutritional supplement consisting essentially of an effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, and a food acceptable carrier, wherein the effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, is from about 0.1 μg to about 400 $\mu\text{g/kg}$ of body weight.
2. (original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of adding the hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, to the carrier, and wherein the carrier comprises food or water.
3. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the nutritional supplement is provided in capsule form.
4. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the warm-blooded vertebrate is a human, or an equine, canine, or feline species.
5. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the joint pain is the result of an arthritic condition.
6. (original) The method of claim 5 wherein the arthritic condition is selected from the group consisting of osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.
7. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the joint pain is the result of an inflammatory condition involving skeletal or musculoskeletal structures.
8. (original) A nutritional supplement consisting essentially of an effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, and a food acceptable carrier, the nutritional supplement provided in an orally ingestible dosage form.
9. (original) The nutritional supplement of claim 8 wherein the effective amount of hyaluronic acid is 1 to 6 mg.
10. (original) The nutritional supplement of claim 8 wherein the orally ingestible dosage form is a capsule or gel seal.
11. (new) A method for relieving joint pain or other discomforts associated with joint disorders in a warm-blooded vertebrate comprising the step of delivering to said vertebrate by oral ingestion a nutritional supplement consisting essentially of an effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof.

12. (new) The method of claim 11 wherein the effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, is from about 0.1 μg to about 400 $\mu\text{g/kg}$ of body weight.

13. (new) The method of claim 11 wherein the effective amount of hyaluronic acid, or a salt or digest thereof, is provided in liquid form.